

# *Great Expectations*

## **Chapters 3 and 4**

### **1) Joe was a victim of childhood and miserable marriage . Discuss**

Pip learned that Joe had never received an education; he was basically **illiterate**. Joe explained to Pip that when he was a child, he and his mother had spent their time dealing with his drunken father. His father didn't give him any opportunity for schooling. His father was always drunk, and as a result would beat Joe and his mother causing them to leave and stay somewhere else. Then Just as Joe's mother would decide to send Joe to school, his father would come to them with a crowd to fetch them. This was repeated several times and finally Joe was sent to work as a blacksmith till both his parents died. After that he decided to marry Pip's sister owing to the reputation she had of bringing up her little brother by hand. He then **submitted** to Mrs. Joe because he didn't want to be cruel to her as his father was to his mother.

### **2) In what way does Dickens convey the idea of death and decay in this chapter?**

Dickens conveys the idea of death and decay in this chapter by giving a very **grim** picture of Satis House and Miss Havisham. The windows are either walled up or barred like a prison. The house is dark and Miss Havisham's room is only lit by a candle. Miss Havisham herself is a strange sight for Pip. Her home is closed off completely from sunlight, and she sits in a dusty room lit by candlelight. She wears a yellowing wedding dress, and only one shoe. Dresses and jewels are scattered around the room. The longer Pip is there, he realizes that all of the clocks and watches he sees are stopped at the same time: twenty minutes to nine. The way Miss Havisham has shut herself from daylight suggests **isolation** from the outer world. The brewery and the garden are completely neglected. Although she is a rich woman who has all the luxuries of life, yet she is a **gloomy** decayed sight.

**3) “ Estella was Pip’s incentive to have great expectations” . How far is this statement true ?**

Estella is **rude and abusive** to Pip to the point of being **cruel**. She is approximately his age, but she acts older. She calls him "boy," and criticizes him as a **commoner**. She mocks his thick boots and his rough hands, as being those of a common labouring-boy. Pip looks at his rough hands and common boots. They had never troubled him before, but now he sees them as things to be ashamed of. Pip's eyes begin to fill with tears, and Estella notices this. She takes pleasure in being the cause of it, and when Pip realizes this, he is able to hold back the tears. Then, when Estella is gone, he hides himself and cries. He has never felt **ashamed of himself until now: ashamed of his upbringing, ashamed of his ignorance, and ashamed of Joe**. She is the one who let him feel **humiliated and ashamed** of himself. Pip is ashamed of his position in society and his lack of education, and he decides to do whatever he can to improve his own education. She is his incentive to have great expectations and to change to meet her social standard. With the introduction of Miss Havisham and Estella, **the themes of social class, ambition, and advancement** move to the forefront of the novel. Pip’s hopes (encouraged by Mrs. Joe’s and Pumblechook’s suggestive comments) that Miss Havisham intends to raise him into wealth and high social class are given special urgency by the passionate attraction he feels for Estella. His feelings for the **“very pretty and very proud”** young lady, combined with the deep impression made on him by Satis House, with its haunted atmosphere, and tragic sense of mystery, raise in Pip a new consciousness of his own low birth and common bearing. When he returns from Satis House, he even lies about his experience there, unwilling to spoil his thoughts of it with the contrasting plainness of his everyday world: Estella and Miss Havisham must remain “far above the level of such common doings.”

**4) What were Pip’s lies ? Why did he resort to such constructed lies ? What was Joe’s advice to Pip?**

Pip told a fantastic story about his visit. He said that Miss Havisham was seated in a black velvet coach in her room, and that Estella handed round cake and wine in gold plates. And that there were four dogs which fought for veal cutlets out of a silver basket. Mrs. Joe asked Mr. Pumblechook if the coach could be possible, and he had to confess that he had never seen the woman, although

he had spoken to her from outside her door. Pumblechook then asked Pip what game he played. Pip answered that they played flags; Estella waved a blue flag and Pip a red flag. They then waved swords which were produced from a cupboard where he saw pistols. He added that there was no daylight in the room which was lighted by wax candles.

He told lies about his visit because he had felt miserable and could not explain himself to his sister and Mr. Pumblechook. He was also low spirited because Estella called him a common boy. Pip chose to tell lies because he felt that if he had told the truth, nobody would have believed him as the truth would be stranger than fiction.

Joe wanted Pip to know that lies cannot be justified and that Pip can't be uncommon by being a liar. He told him **" If you can't get to be uncommon through going straight , you'll never get to do it through going crooked ."**

**Comment on the following quotations:-**

- 1) " You are not afraid of a woman who has never seen the sun since you were born . "**

These words were said by Miss Havisham to Pip when he went to visit her at Satis house for the first time. He entered the house by a side door, and Pip noticed how dark the passages were. All afraid Pip knocked at the door, and a voice from within told him to enter. He found himself in a large room, well lit with a wax candle but without a glimmer of day light. The strangest lady he has ever seen was sitting at a dressing table, dressed in white satin and lace and with a veil on her head. When Pip came closer he observed that the white had faded to yellow with age and that although the dress must first have been worn by the lady when she was young, she also was now shrunken with age. Miss Havisham asked Pip if he was afraid of a woman who has not seen the sun since he was born. Pip, although he was very much afraid, assured Miss Havisham that he was not. She told him that her heart was broken and then she commanded them to play.

- 2) " He calls the Knaves , Jacks , this boy !And what coarse hands he has ! and what thick boots !"**

Estella said these words to Miss Havisham about Pip. Estella is rude to Pip to the point of being cruel. She is approximately his age, but she acts older. She calls him "boy," and criticizes him as a commoner. She mocks his thick boots and his rough hands, as

being those of a common labouring-boy. Pip looks at his rough hands and common boots. They had never troubled him before, but now he sees them as things to be ashamed of. Pip's eyes begin to fill with tears, and Estella notices this. She takes pleasure in being the cause of it, and when Pip realizes this, he is able to hold back the tears. Then, when Estella is gone, he hides himself and cries. He has never felt ashamed of himself until now: ashamed of his upbringing, ashamed of his ignorance, and ashamed of Joe. Pip is ashamed of his position in society and his lack of education, and he decides to do whatever he can to improve his own education. She is the one who let him feel humiliated and ashamed of himself. She is his incentive to have great expectations and to change to meet her social standard.

**3" This is where I will be laid when I'm dead . They shall come and look at me here ."**

Miss Havisham said these words to Pip when they entered the room where Pip saw the long table which been laid to the wedding feast. Miss Havisham tells him to walk with her around the table, and tells him that this is where she will be laid out when she dies, in her bride's dress and on her bride's table. She pointed to each of the visitors his/her place round the table on her funeral.

**5) “ It and I have worn away together .The mice have gnawed at it, and sharper teeth than teeth of mice have gnawed at me .”  
Comment .**

Miss Havisham said these words to Pip. Miss Havisham pointed to the bridal cake. The cake was brought to the room many years before Pip was born. It was born on the occasion of her wedding, but it was worn away and so was Miss Havisham. The cake became food for the mice that had grown on it.

**6) " Break their hearts my pride and hope , break their hearts and have no mercy ."**

Estella's moods towards Pip were so many and so opposed to one another. Sometimes she would tolerate Pip, sometimes he would be quite familiar with him which made Pip puzzled what to say or do. Miss Havisham was happy and would murmur in her ears with these words. She wanted her to break men's hearts and to have no mercy on them. She wanted Estella to revenge on all men for her

sake because she hated them. Miss Havisham would often ask Pip if Estella was growing prettier, when he said “yes” she seemed to enjoy it greedily.

## Best Wishes